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Bird Haven on Island Preferred

TR 'Glorified Gyroscope' Memorial Rouses Scorn of Grandson Kermit

By Robert L. Asher
Staff Reporter

TR's grandson took a look at proposed plans for the controversial Theodore Roosevelt Island Memorial yesterday and decided the island would be better left alone.

"Any connection that thing has with TR would be far-fetched," he said, shaking his head.

Kermit Roosevelt was quick to disagree with the Theodore Roosevelt Centennial Commission and other backers of the Memorial, who plan a huge "celestial sphere" monument, complete with automobile approach and a 200-car parking lot.

"An unadorned bird sanc-

tuary is much more appropriate," said Roosevelt. "Conservation was one of TR's great interests. I can't see any connection here. This looks like the end of that purpose."

Roosevelt, an ardent conservationist, said any monument erected on the island should have "at least some discernible relation" to TR's love for the outdoors.

The cost of bringing civilization to the naturalist's paradise, estimated at nearly \$900,000, brought a look of surprise and a two-word comment:

"Good Lord!"

Roosevelt feels the huge sphere to be erected in honor of the former President, which has been called every-

thing from a "glorified gyroscope" to "doughnuts in limbo," should be replaced with bird baths.

The monument, designed by architect Eric Gugler and sculptor Paul Manship, is a larger model of one by the same sculptor in Meridian Hill Park.

"I really don't see any need for another in our city," Roosevelt commented.

The bill for the monument project, passed by the House, is on the Senate's calendar for action this month.

Probable results of building a memorial mean destruction of the area as a haven for wild life, said Roosevelt, adding, "It's a darn shame."